A map of Illinois' 11th Congressional District, which includes parts of Cook, DuPage, Kane, and Will counties. The map is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue shape representing the district's boundaries. Numerous blue location pins are scattered across the map, indicating various points of interest or development projects. Major highways like I-55, I-355, and I-294 are visible. City names such as Naperville, Woodridge, and Plainfield are labeled.

Congressman Bill Foster's

Project Growth

**Promoting Jobs And Economic
Development For Illinois' 11th District**

foster.house.gov

#ProjectGrowth



I am proud to launch Project Growth to bring a renewed focus on job creation and economic development in our community. We have great potential to bring jobs and opportunity to Illinois with the right focus on ensuring our workers have the skills they need for 21st century jobs, and businesses have the tools and infrastructure they need to thrive.

Over the past year, I have met with people throughout the 11th District – from local business owners, to mayors and village presidents, to educators, to working men and women – who are doing their part to build a brighter future for Illinois. With the launch of Project Growth, we will bring these members of our community together to develop an agenda to grow our local economy and bring jobs and opportunity to our region.

As a scientist and businessman, I recognize that real progress doesn't come from partisan rhetoric or poll-tested talking points, but from a close examination of what works in the real world, what doesn't work and how we can close the gap.

My goal in launching Project Growth is to do a deep examination of what's working in our communities, what isn't working, and what we can be doing to support job creation and economic development.

I look forward to working together to support growth in our community.

Sincerely,

Bill Foster

Member of Congress

Project Growth: Key Issues

Strengthening the Middle Class

The middle class is the backbone of our economy and a strong middle class is essential to economic success. Priorities for strengthening the middle class include:

- Increasing the minimum wage
- Extending emergency unemployment insurance
- Ensuring college and workforce training programs are affordable and accessible

Transportation and Infrastructure

Investing in transportation and infrastructure is essential to ensuring businesses have the resources they need to thrive. Priorities for strengthening our infrastructure include:

- Completing the Illiana Expressway
- Improving our waterway infrastructure
- Investing in public transportation

Education and Workforce Development

Education and workforce development is essential to drawing businesses to our community. Priorities for education and workforce development include:

- Expanding STEM education
- Training to prepare our workforce for 21st century jobs
- Building partnerships between schools and the business community

Manufacturing

With a central location, and a high density of innovators and researchers, our region is uniquely positioned to support advanced manufacturing.

Priorities for supporting manufacturing jobs include:

- Closing the skills gap – many manufacturers have jobs available, but can't find workers with the necessary training and skills to do the job
- Promoting small business growth with development resources and tax credits

Project Growth: Priorities

In the last year, Congressman Foster has focused on these core issues -- sponsoring legislation, writing letters to officials, and fighting for action.

Strengthening the Middle Class

- Congressman Foster co-sponsored H.R. 1010, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013, which would gradually increase the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour over a two-year period. Raising the minimum wage would lift thousands of workers out of poverty. Additionally, an increase in the federal minimum wage would help level the playing field for Illinois businesses that face continuous competitive pressure from low-wage states.
- Congressman Foster co-sponsored H.R. 3546, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. Since the program expired on December 28, 2013, over two million Americans, including 116,136 Illinois residents, have lost unemployment insurance. It's estimated that this has already cost the economy \$2 billion nationally and nearly \$200 million in Illinois.
- Congressman Foster is fighting for funding for the Workforce Investment Act, which includes grants for providing adults, young people, and dislocated workers with the skills they need to get a job.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- Congressman Foster fought to move forward with the Illiana Highway project. He organized a bipartisan letter from other Members of Congress to a local planning commission to approve the Illiana Expressway in southern Will County.
- Congressman Foster co-sponsored H.R. 2553, the National Infrastructure Development Bank Act of 2013, which would create a national infrastructure bank to build roads, bridges, and other infrastructure by issuing tax-exempt bonds similar to municipal bonds.
- Congressman Foster co-sponsored H.R. 721, the Short Line Railroad Rehabilitation and Investment Act of 2013, which would extend an expiring tax credit for short line railroad track maintenance. Short line railroads serve

communities that otherwise wouldn't have direct access to the Class I rail network. There are two short line railroads in the 11th Congressional District.

- Congressman Foster voted for H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, which would reform the process for approving inland waterways project to reduce delays.
- In his testimony before the House Appropriations Committee, Congressman Foster requested full funding for the Army Corps of Engineers to maintain our Inland Waterways System, which allows companies to ship bulk goods cheaply and supports exports.

Education and Workforce Development

- Foster introduced H.R. 1289, the National Fab Lab Network Act of 2013 which would establish a national Fab Lab network throughout the United States to promote advanced manufacturing in the U.S. and invest in the next generation of entrepreneurs and innovators. The legislation has received bipartisan support in the House and has a companion piece that was introduced by Senator Dick Durbin.
- Foster introduced H.R. 2159, the 21st Century STEM Competitive Jobs Act, legislation that would help prepare students for careers in high-demand technical fields by supporting collaboration between schools and employers. The legislation was modeled after the Pathways to Prosperity project in Aurora, IL.
- Congressman Foster is fighting for funding for education programs that teach students practical skills, like Perkins Career and Technical Education, and programs that invest in early education, like Head Start.

Manufacturing

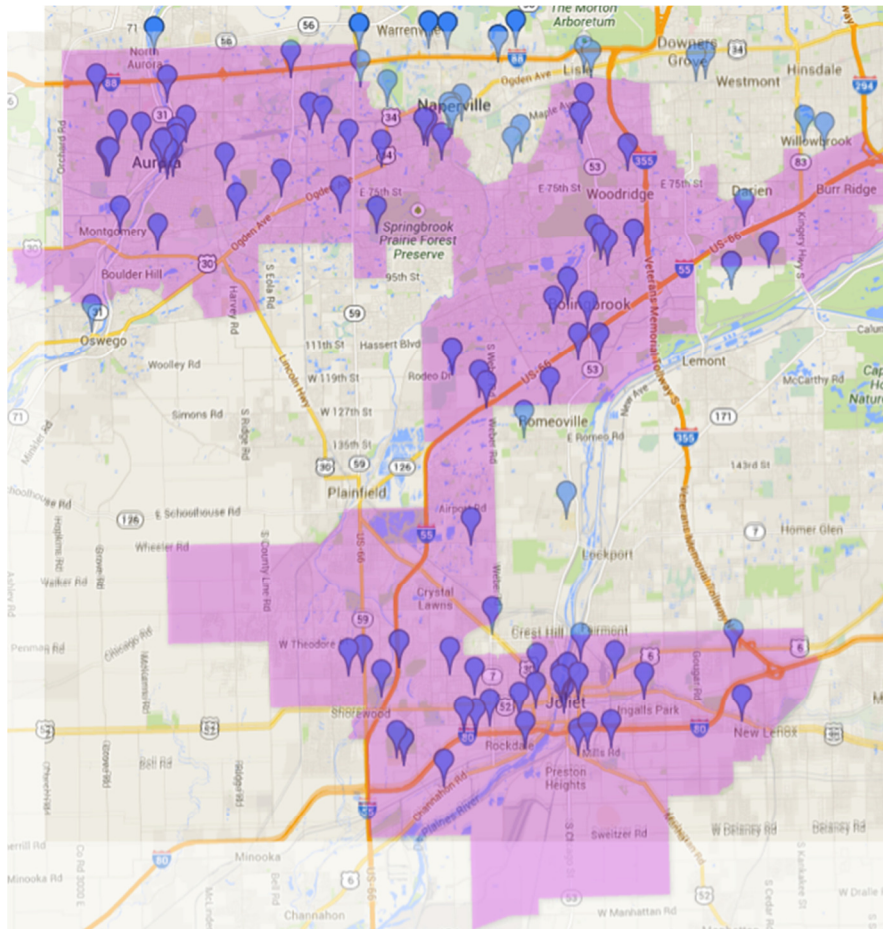
- Congressman Foster co-sponsored H.R.949, the Invest in American Jobs Act of 2013, which would close existing loopholes in existing Buy America law with respect to infrastructure investments.
- Congressman Foster joined the entire Illinois Delegation in supporting the University of Illinois's grant proposal to the Department of Defense to create a Digital Lab for Manufacturing. This project will bring together academic institutions, private industry, and the public sector to research and promote

innovation in manufacturing, energy, transportation, food production, and healthcare technology.

- Congressman Foster cosponsored H.R. 949, the Invest in American Jobs Act of 2013, which requires public transportation projects to increase the use of materials produced in America.
- Congressman Foster co-sponsored H.R.497, the America Works Act. This bipartisan legislation would create industry-approved training standards in certain sectors that would be recognized nationwide. Workers who completed federally funded training programs or otherwise passed a certain skills threshold would receive a standardized credential. Businesses anywhere in the country could be confident that workers with these credentials could perform needed roles.
- Congressman Foster signed a letter to the House Appropriations Committee supporting the President's budget request for the Advanced Manufacturing Office, which partners with industry, small business, universities and other stakeholders to identify and invest in emerging foundational technologies with the potential to create high-quality domestic manufacturing jobs.
- Congressman Foster signed a letter to the House Appropriations Committee funding for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, which provides education and training to millions of students and displaced workers.
- Congressman Foster is working to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, whose charter expires at the end of the year, and has supported more than \$600 million in exports from the 11th Congressional District over the last five years.

Project Growth: Community Outreach

In the last year, Congressman Foster toured the district, visiting over **145 businesses and community groups** to hear directly from constituents and community leaders.



As a scientist and a businessman, Foster recognizes that nothing can be accomplished without getting into the community and gaining first-hand knowledge of the opportunities and challenges we face.

To request a meeting with Congressman Foster, visit foster.house.gov.

For more information on Project Growth, visit foster.house.gov